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ONTARIO'S EMERGING PROGRAM OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

October 29, 1968



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Objectives

The White Paper, Design for Development, and subsequent speeches by the Prime Minister and the Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, indicate three important objectives in the overall regional development program in the Province of Ontario. These are:

1. The encouragement of each region of the Province to achieve its socio-economic potential, insofar as such encouragement is in harmony with overall provincial interest and development
2. The encouragement of careful use of the natural environment
3. The improvement of both efficiency and effectiveness of provincial departmental services by encouraging a coordinated rather than a unilateral or piecemeal approach to (a) regional problems of interest to more than one department, and (b) to general administrative matters, especially those involving administrative regions.

Administrative Machinery of Design for Development

The machinery for carrying these objectives forward to

implementation consists of:

1. Regional Development Councils, organized one for each of the ten planning regions, supported partially by the provincial government and partly by local municipalities, and containing membership selected by municipalities, with one member serving from the Services Section of the Regional Development Branch. Particularly within the past year, these Councils have emerged as important sources of recommended change in their respective regions. Each Council was asked by the Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics on March 25, 1968, to submit by Autumn, 1968, a formal statement of its major problems, and recommended solutions and priorities. These recommendations are on schedule. At the same time, the Minister indicated that he considered the roles of the Councils to be advisory, and yet meaningful.
2. A Cabinet Committee on Policy Development, Chaired by the Prime Minister, and containing the following departments: Education, Labour, Reform Institutions, Trade and Development, Treasury and Economics, and a Minister without Portfolio.
3. An Advisory Committee, at the Deputy Minister level, Chaired by the Deputy Minister of Treasury and Economics, and containing the following additional departments: Agriculture, Energy and Resources Management, Highways, Lands and Forests, Municipal Affairs, Trade and Development, Tourism, and the Office of the Prime Minister.

4. Regional Advisory Boards, comprised of senior civil servants of provincial departments which are on the Advisory Committee and which have field offices. Each of these Boards has been organized for each planning region.
5. The Regional Development Branch of the Department of Treasury and Economics. This Branch has responsibility for preparation of comprehensive economic plans for consideration by the Advisory Committee. These plans, based upon recommendations of the Regional Development Councils and the Regional Advisory Boards, plus results of research from universities, from other Departments, and from the Branch itself, will first be forwarded to the Regional Development Councils for "grass roots" reaction, and then will be sent to the Advisory Committee for consideration. Ultimately, they will move up to the Cabinet Committee on Policy Development.

Momentum to Date

The Regional Development Program has moved forward rapidly since January, 1967. Important milestones can be considered as follows:

1. January, 1967: Establishment of a schedule towards the initiation of a specific plan for each region. This schedule involves three stages. The first stage is an inventory of all programs, policies, and information of provincial departments that might be of value in an emerging regional development program. This was completed in 1967.

The second stage is an evaluation of certain basic trends of the Province, on a very fine geographic mesh. Thus, where possible, the performance of each township regarding changes in population, and in primary, secondary and tertiary activities, is being compared with that of the Province as a whole. Through clustering of townships and counties with similar performance records, three types of region are expected to emerge in this planning stage. One type is that of a region of self-sustained growth, in which the major problems are those of space adjustment. A second is that of inconsistent or fluctuating growth, in which some assistance may be necessary in order to bring that region to its full potential. A third type is that of slow growth in which major assistance may be necessary if the region is to achieve its potential. The second stage will be completed in 1968. The third stage, to be initiated in 1969, is the actual plan stage, about which more will be said in the next section.

2. February, 1967: Initiation of the Inventory stage.

3. March, 1967: Acceptance of responsibility from the Prime Minister for the Niagara Escarpment Study, coordinated by Professor L.O. Gertler of the University of Waterloo.

4. January-June, 1967: Initiation of a dynamic university research series, the results of which already are beginning to be useful in Ontario's development program. In this research series, of which a copy of specific topics is enclosed, contracts have been let with all fourteen Ontario universities.

5. June, 1967: A June 30 statement indicating the approach, methods and criteria to be used in the evaluation stage that began in 1968. Those methods are briefly explained under point 1 (a) above.

6. September, 1967: Initiation of a pilot evaluation study in the MODA region. This study was necessary in order to test certain techniques of regional information gathering and regional aggregation.

7. December, 1967: Completion of the inventory stage.

8. January, 1968: Initiation of the evaluation stage for all regions of the Province except MODA, where the evaluation stage had been initiated in the previous September.

9. February, 1968: Approval by the Advisory Committee on Regional Development, and by the Committee on Policy Development, of the policy paper, "Regional Development Policy in Ontario," a paper emphasizing the application of the growth point principle to the Province.

10. March, 1968: Invitation by the Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics to the Regional Development Councils, and subsequently to the Regional Advisory Boards, for submissions on recommended programs. These submissions involved five main headings:

a. Identification of major problems where the solutions

are to be found mainly in urbanization.

- b. The recommended selection of specific growth points in each region.
- c. Identification of major problems where solutions are non-urban.
- d. Establishment of priorities in points a to c above.
- e. Recommendations for land use measures under which points a to d, above, may be implemented.

These recommended programs are to be submitted by November 30, 1968.

11. April, 1968: Initiation of an ARDA/FRED study of Northwestern Ontario, under joint Federal-Provincial support and supervision. This specialized study of the densely populated portion of Northwestern Ontario is a special phase of the regional evaluation stage.

12. June, 1968: Release of Goals Plan study, accompanied by a request for a general reaction within government by October 31, 1968, and from outside groups by December 31, 1968.

13. August, 1968: Creation of a Goals Plan Study Committee comprised of the same departments as are on the Advisory Committee, to review the reactions to the Goals Plan presentation, and submit these to the Advisory Committee. Because of the close timing between the planning stage of the Regional Development Branch and the release of the Goals Plan study, this Committee is also to act as a sounding board for regional development

principles involving metropolitan areas and immediately adjacent territories. Thus a smooth transition will be established from the Goals Plan study, released in June, and the emerging regional development program.

14. November, 1968: Submission to government of three-part Niagara Escarpment Study, as follows:

- a. Niagara Escarpment Study and Recreation Report.
- b. Niagara Escarpment Study Extractive Industries Report.
- c. Niagara Escarpment Study Fruit Belt Report.

15. November, 1968: Submission by Regional Development Councils of their recommended programs.

16. December, 1968: Completion of evaluation stage and initiation of plan stage of Ontario's regional development program.

The Plan Stage

It is expected that the actual plans treating the major objectives listed on page 1 will involve two stages. The first stage will emphasize solutions to problems of an economic and social nature, and improvement in both the efficiency and effectiveness of provincial government service. The closely related question regarding care of the natural environment will be given attention in a second stage.

Ontario is increasingly urban. The primary problems of a socio-economic nature in Ontario, and a solution to those problems, are to be found in mainly urban places.

Most of Ontario's citizens now live in urban areas, and even more are employed in urban areas. The main possibilities for employment in these areas now lie in the tertiary activities, with an important but relatively declining number in secondary activities, and a still smaller number in primary activities.

We shall look, therefore, to the urban scene to provide a substantial share of the potential for all regions of the Province. An urban area can be termed a central place. A growth point is a central place with potential for regional growth. A growth pole is a central place with potential for national growth.

In developing plans for the Province, we shall be particularly interested in the selection of appropriate growth centres and poles for regions of self-sustained growth, of fluctuating growth, and of slow growth. Clearly, the functions of such growth points in regions of self-sustained growth will be to channel rather than stimulate economic activity. In fluctuating growth, some stimulation may be necessary. In slow growth major stimulation may be necessary.

The first responsibility in devising the plans, therefore, is to select the central places, large and small, which will become appropriate growth points for the type of region in which that point is found. This selection will first involve a theoretical approach, adaptation of the theoretical network to existing urban patterns or projected new towns, and

a further adaptation in view of natural environmental limitations and requirements.

Although existing theory will be of value in this selection, it will be necessary to give much attention to the unique locations and conditions of every possible growth point. The actual selection of growth points will depend heavily upon the principle of space potential. We consider here the term space potential to denote the basic time/cost considerations for the transfer of selected goods and persons as specified target dates of the plan. Such considerations will apply specially to the obtaining of raw materials, energy, etc. from supply sites, and to the marketing of finished goods and services. Thus a potential growth point will be judged with respect to its present and future time/cost situation, considered by various transportation media, with respect to the location of the resources it needs, and such major regional markets as Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg.

In our large metropolitan areas, the cost of transferring goods and services must be assessed against still another variable - transfer of people. For example, is the total ratio of benefit-to-cost greater if (1) people commute to work, perhaps by "GO" train, for distances of up to 100 miles to and from a metropolitan area or (2) raw and semi-finished materials are shipped from a metropolitan area to a neighbouring town that attracts its own journey-to-work zone, and the finished products returned to the metropolitan area?

Natural environmental and cultural considerations

will involve such basic ideas as (1) water supply, (2) sewage disposal, (3) requirements for non-urban land uses, especially agriculture, (4) specific natural barriers or severe hindrances such as (a) occurrence of key natural resources, (b) extremes of climate and (c) configuration of the Canadian Shield.

Once the growth points have been selected in this objective way, they must be considered with respect to another very important viewpoint - policy. What, specifically, does the Province wish to do in each of the three types of performance regions? For example, if there is a dedicated interest to the development of the mid-North, a policy of development of this type of slow growth area will need to be understood clearly, and a specified level of investment over a specified year period should be anticipated before returns can be expected. Thus amortization, if and when it occurs, would be very delayed action.

In the areas of fluctuating growth, it is possible that less investment may be necessary for more quick return. However, these areas probably will lie in areas of substantial farm land and open space that we may wish to be reserved for rural use, and hence there may be a definite conflict between urban and rural land uses in these intermediate areas.

Finally, it is likely that the areas of self-sustained growth will be the Province's metropolitan areas, and here we are confronted with a major problem of space adjustment. A

basic question arises as to the degree to which, and the means by which such space adjustment can be effected by the Province.

With respect to improvement of provincial efficiency, it is expected that unnecessary overlap in research will be eliminated and an overall approach to problems of common interest will be initiated. Careful inquiry will be made concerning the pattern of existing administrative regions, and the degree to which these varied regions can be brought into geographical harmonization without loss of efficiency on the part of any one department.

Finally, there is the overlapping nature of this objective into objective No. 1. For example, if provincial services can be clustered into key urban centres, much will have been accomplished towards establishing growth points in such centres.

Economic activity, and provincial departmental actions, do not occur in a vacuum, but in a natural environment. The existing and future use of that environment is also an important objective in the Design for Development approach. Specific suggestions for improved use of this natural environment will be presented in a later stage of this overall Regional Development Program.





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